

**GREENSBORO ADVISORY COMMISSION ON TREES
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 4, 2008
(DRAFT)**

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Advisory Commission on Trees was held on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 3:12 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 2nd floor, Melvin Municipal Office Building, Greensboro, North Carolina. Members present were: Chairman Mark Taylor, Emilie Sandin, Chuck Truby, Michael Hatcher, Keith Francies, Tim Knowles, Frank Forde, and Dr. Kenneth Snowden. Greensboro Urban Forester Mike Cusimano was also in attendance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABSENCES

Chair Taylor acknowledged Mr. Hall's absence as excused.

APPRECIATION/THANK YOU TO CHAIRMAN, MARK TAYLOR

Mr. Cusimano commended Chair Taylor and thanked him for his outstanding job in directing the Commission and conducting the meetings.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER FRANCIS FORDE, JR.

Chair Taylor welcomed the Commission's newest member, Frank Forde, who is filling the position of Developer.

Chair Taylor informed the Commission that Mr. Truby now fills the Civil Engineer position, and he gave an overview of events leading up to the latest appointments. He also advised the Commission that the Arborist position is still vacant, and there was a discussion regarding the importance of filling the position with an experienced individual with a background in trees in order to maintain the intended composition of the Commission.

LDO PROCESS

Chair Taylor stated that some Commission members expressed concern over Mr. Hails's statement at the last meeting that ACT would have no formal involvement in the CAT committee's review and possible revision of the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Ms. Sandin pointed out a reference in the Manual on page 7 which she felt indicated that CAT committee revisions should be reviewed by ACT before the community review. Chair Taylor requested that Mr. Cusimano contact Mr. Hails to gain clarification on the discrepancy. Commission members also discussed the possibility of marginalizing the Ordinance by moving it to the environmental section.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Randall Romie, landscape architect and former member of ACT, stated his opinion that the Commission should be asked to review changes to the Landscape Ordinance. He added that the affiliations and backgrounds of CAT members should be known, and a recommendation be made that they have balanced representation to insure that the City will have the best Landscape Ordinance possible.

POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE

Chair Taylor reviewed the Commission's goals for 2008, and he cited the number one priority of revising and improving the Ordinance. He pointed out to the Commission that if any suggested revisions are to be made to the Ordinance before the LDO process freezes them out, it will have to be done this summer in order to go before City Council in the fall.

Chair Taylor introduced a handout previously distributed to Commissioners and suggested that this draft be used as a starting point for possible revisions as it involved single family housing which the Commission has expressed an interest in.

It was noted that the basis of the handout document would represent amendments to the Landscaping Ordinance and not the Tree Protection Ordinance, and Mr. Cusimano reminded the Commission that their mission was to look at the tree preservation requirements of the Ordinance. Commission members discussed that tree preservation and landscaping are linked together in the Tree Preservation and Landscape Manual. Mr. Cusimano pointed out that as stated under the explanation of the Commission's powers and duties, City Council has separated the Commission's duties into recommending changes to the Tree Preservation Ordinance.

It was also noted that the CAT committee is discussing the distributed document in their review of landscaping requirements in Module 3. Commissioner Knowles advised the Commission that a recommendation was made to the CAT committee to require more trees and less shrubs to maintain the tree canopy. A discussion followed regarding the excision of landscaping from Module 4 into Module 3 and the exclusion of ACT from the formal review process.

Mr. Cusimano asked Commission members to e-mail any specific sections or portions of the Ordinance that they feel may need revising so the items can be incorporated into next month's agenda.

TREES AND UTILITIES

Chair Taylor updated the Commission regarding a request from Randall Romie to engage Duke Energy in a discussion about their pruning and species requirements. Chair Taylor distributed a handout identifying Duke Energy's approved species for transmission rights of way. It was noted that some of the species on the Duke Energy list are on the city's list of invasive species. It was suggested that ACT generate a letter to Duke Energy recommending that they remove the invasive species.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Taylor advised the Commission that the Westridge Neighborhood Conservation Overlay was approved by City Council.

Mr. Cusimano informed the Commission of a Tree Preservation Workshop on June 12, 2008.

Mr. Francies presented a bi-annual update on the National Register of Big Trees.

Chair Taylor read his letter of farewell to Commission members. He stated he plans to return periodically as a visitor, and he wished the Commission well.

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There being no further discussions before the Commission, the meeting ended at 5:06 p.m.

Mark Taylor, Chairman
Advisory Commission on Trees

MT/sm:jd